

The Eclectic Theosophist

NO. 8

Jan. 31, 1972

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER FROM POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

P.O. Box 9966 — San Diego, California 92109

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AS ANOTHER YEAR BEGINS

By GEORGE CARDINAL LeGROS

Long ago I read an article entitled "Try Giving Yourself Away." The idea it presented was a complete reversal of western psychology because from childhood on we are taught to compete, to "get there first" and "get all you can" even if it means clawing our way to success over the prostrate forms of vanquished rivals.

But the idea in this article stressed the opposite. It suggested that, instead of grabbing everything in sight and trampling underfoot everyone in our way, we adopt a policy of self-forgetfulness, co-operation, and service. We were to start thinking of others as extensions of ourselves, seeing them as expressions of the same Essence of Being that abides in us, and is the source of all we are. It was a revolutionary concept, and an illuminating one. It declared the Divine Brotherhood of Man.

Many years have passed since that idea entered into my thinking; and the older I grow the stronger becomes the conviction that it is true. I have seen it work in a hundred ways. It also gave birth to many attendant ideas. For example, I began to see my own life, not as a precious personal thing to be guarded at any cost, but as something independent, as it were, of my inner thinking self. It was merely a vehicle, a tool, a means, which I was temporarily using for a certain purpose. And what was that purpose? I thought about it for a long time.

Then the answer came: my life was not really my own—a treasure to be personally loved and cherished—but a possession of the universe. If I held it as a prize belonging to me alone, it would wither and die, and I with it; but if I offered it back to the universe from which it came, I was at one with the universe, at one with everything everywhere. And that made me free, happy, at peace, and whole. Giving myself back to the All-Of-Things, I became at one with the humanity around me, and I could begin to love that humanity.

"Try Giving Yourself Away" is what I tried to do, and am still trying, because it does away with the limited, narrow, soul-destroying prison of thought wherein one dwells when he lives for himself alone. Beyond self is the Greater Self, and all the stars, the vastness of Space, the glory of Eternity, and the harmony that thrills in the inmost Heart of everything and everyone.

What a relief it is to drop the heavy burden of personal concern, personal strivings for power and possessions, and go out into the frontierless expanses of universal life, merging all that one is with the splendor of that Immensity! It means "going Home" while still here. It is something to think about as another year begins.

LIVING THEOSOPHY — THEOS-SOPHIA

DR. K. FREITAG

The following is a summary made by the author of his talk given at the Annual Conference of The Theosophical Society (formerly Point Loma), September 26, 1971, at The Hague Holland, briefly reported in our last issue.—Eds.

By some 'Theos' may be regarded as the exoteric God, the ruling, punishing, rewarding, intervening One outside the Cosmos. He has been humanized in religions and their dogmas. He is dead. But 'Theos' may also be looked upon as the living, esoteric God, who involves, infolds into the Creation and is present and active there as its core. God, who is Unity, makes the Cosmos into one living organism in which life, and thus man, is integrated. God is the core or spark that emanates through the soul and the spirit. This is *living* Theosophy. If, however, it is a doctrine based on books and statements, it is dead. Then Theosophy is not a divine experience, an inspiration but, like ice, it has solidified in the human consciousness. But if God emanates from our soul core, then it is like water vapor which becomes liquid, living water in our souls.

Jesus (especially in the Gospel of Thomas) speaks of the *living* God. If man becomes conscious of this as an experience, not as a process of thought, he realizes metanoia, rebirth. Then Christos (not Jesus) rises from the dead in matter.

Living Theosophy is mysticism; not transitory ecstatic mysticism—whether aroused artificially or not—but life-giving and life-directing religion. Detachment is an unavoidable condition, because it allows man to experience the unity of All as Alaya and All-Love. Man then has been taken up in the living Cosmos, in the living divine force, which is its source and sustainer. He then realizes in himself the return to the divine source. What takes place cosmically in billions of years, man is able to accomplish during this life.

There are many names for the God-spark, the divine force present in the human soul and spirit, such as *âtman* *shekinah* (Cabbala), *Gottesfunke* (Meister Eckhart) and The Kingdom of Heaven.

Where God is not active, there is death, devil and negation. So there is also a dead Theosophy, as said before. Theosophy is a living force when the well-known motto 'Gnothi Seauton'—Know Yourself—is experienced by us as the divine force *within* ourselves, on the strength of which we are children of God. This is the deep meaning of the Upanishadic 'Tat tvam asi.' 'Gnothi Seauton' means: Return to the soul core and from there experience the divine force which evolves our consciousness through soul and spirit.

Sophia, Divine Wisdom, is not a phase of consciousness, but the pure consciousness of the Christos (its son) as 'Le Milieu Divin', the divine center of Cosmos and Man.

Sophia is the mystic, intuitive experience of this center (becoming only in our brain-mind consciousness rigid and dying). It is the epiphany of Logos, through which Christos manifests both in us and in the Cosmos as a redeeming force. It has a centrifugal action and makes Theosophy a living power, a living, timeless karmic process. Thus man is himself the Path, along which he may return to its and his source.

In the mysticism of the Hindus, Sophia is Brahman of the trinity Parabrahman—Brahman—Âtman. It is Isis in the trinity Osiris—Isis—Horus. Sophia unveils Isis, who is herself; it unveils the world of Mâyâ. *Living Theosophy* strips Sophia and every holy scripture of all dogmas, thus revealing Truth. Inayat Khan, who brought Sufism to the West, said: 'Make God a reality'. Thus the divine process, arising from the living God and the living Wisdom, comes about in and through man, leading to the resurrection of the Christ within him. Such a twice-born human being directs his words, actions, thoughts and feelings exclusively to the divine force working in him and in the Cosmos. He is the Prodigal Son, who returns to the Father, not as a repentant sinner, but as one reborn in and through the divine, timeless and universally active Theos and Sophia. Then Theosophy has become a living force, a mystic experience, an attitude to life and a realization of Truth.

COMMENTS ON "PSYCHIC DISCOVERIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN"

This is really a most important book. It surveys so much of the research of the last decade; and it proves to be a remarkable vindication of much in the Ancient Wisdom, as, for instance, Backster's pioneer experiments in the psychic life of plants. What the authors write about ESP cards is revealing and important too. With a few minor exceptions one can accept all they write. Most interesting is the new theory of time; it is in line with Boodin's concept of time and his field theory.

Psychic Discoveries (by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder, Prentice-Hall) vindicates so much we know to be true in Theosophy, and also gives credence to the mystical theories of many thinkers. Through such a book the learned world may well be led around to Theosophy. The world of authentic philosophers will not turn to Theosophy as a system because it is a Cosmology.

Theosophy is passed by for the same reasons that the works of Royce are little read and the great Lotze's German philosophy almost forgotten. Cosmologies are unpopular in an age of epistemology, logical empiricism and neo-positivism. Descartes set the tone of modern philosophy with his philosophy of knowledge; from then on the famous thinkers are those like Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant—all preoccupied with the problems of knowledge, of logical analysis. This is fine, but as Lotze said: "It is like the tuning of instruments before the concert."

Bowne and Hocking reached out to wider fields of knowledge, seeking a greater synthesis. But the increasing fragmentation of knowledge makes a new philosophical synthesis of thought like that of Lotze or Hegel very remote. The intellectual climate is against it. And yet we cannot neglect the message of Descartes and the problems he posited—

the pervasive problem of Modernity with its dichotomy of a world of spirit and a world of science.

Spinoza saw the problem and strove to unite them in his concept of THE ONE. But Descartes' problem has continued on among thinkers because an Anthropological period had succeeded the Cosmological period. The history of Western thought is a swinging to and fro between these outlooks, which need not be opposed, as Auguste Comte thought. Royce strove magnificently to unite them—and neglect is his reward.

Theosophy's best chance of recognition, therefore, is in the scientific validation of particular points and its historical claims. It is auspicious that such books as *Mme. Blavatsky Defended* have come out at the same time as the paperback of *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*—a work one should have in his library for reference.

—BERNHARD MOLLENHAUER

WHY HELP THE TIBETANS?

By ROSEMARY VOSSE

This is the lead article in Newsletter No. 7, 17th August, 1971, of The Tibetan Friendship Group (Watersedge, Malton Rd., Wynberg, C.P., S. Africa), of which Mrs. Vosse is Secretary-Treasurer. This Group devotes its energies in both practical and educational ways to aid the Tibetans, many of whom are now in monasteries scattered throughout India.—Eds.

This very pertinent question has often been asked by people who point out that surely we have enough to do for the relief of suffering among our own underprivileged. However, apart from the natural pity most of us feel for the brave little Tibetan nation, which appears to have been forgotten by the great world powers, there is a very important reason for helping them.

The Tibetans, whose civilization far outdates those of the West, have an enormous treasury of wisdom and knowledge concerning the inner workings of Nature and the Universe. In their inaccessible portion of the globe, in the pure atmosphere of great heights, certain individuals have through the ages developed spiritual qualities practically beyond our conception. Such are the beings who have been called Masters, Mahâtmas (i.e. 'Great Souls'), Adepts, Elder Brothers, or by other still higher designations.

The invasion of Tibet, which has brought and is bringing so much suffering to those indomitably cheerful people, signals the attention of a wider circle of students, also, to the teachings of these Adepts. To those of us who have had the wonderful opportunity of contacting these teachings and trying them out in our lives, it is clear that there is a solution to the problems of our society and that a happy, healthful life for all is *not* an impossible dream.

Man, we are told, has a very important role in the scheme of evolution: there is a purpose in our existence; we need not be the blind tools of an apparently meaningless Nemesis, doing the will of an inscrutable 'God', the workings of whose mind we cannot fathom. We can, if we choose, become conscious agents in the 'Divine Plan' of Nature, which is continually striving to evolve higher forms of consciousness out of lower ones.

The teaching, generally accepted in the East, is that at the beginning of a period of manifestation, or cycle, numberless un-selfconscious godsparks are breathed out from a divine source and gradually descend, through spiritual and

ethereal realms, into those of matter, repeatedly taking on more complex and gross forms, which enable them to gain experience. In this way they continue peregrinating through countless aeons into mineral, vegetable, animal and finally human forms, the various kingdoms of nature gradually building up the world on which we live.

In this immense cycle man has the most vital role of all, for it is at the human stage that self-consciousness is developed; and from then on the call back to spirit begins to be heard. Man's duty is to listen ever more intently to the voice of the divine spark within him, the voice of conscience exhorting him constantly to raise himself to greater spiritual heights.

It is interesting to discover that the parable of the Prodigal Son, which illustrates this same theme, existed in the Buddhist scriptures before the days of Christ. Actually, all those who take up the study of the world's great religions (a most rewarding occupation: we recommend *The Religions of Man*, published in paperback and available in our libraries, by Huston Smith) very soon find that the same truths are taught by all. However, there are some teachings in the East which have been practically unknown to us westerners for a number of centuries, though they are said to have been current at the time when Christianity was founded (see *Reincarnation in World Thought* by Cranston and Head), mainly the teachings of Karma, the Law of Cause and Effect, and of Reincarnation. Without a proper understanding of these two, life definitely poses riddles which cannot be explained in a logical way.

But, to continue with man's evolutionary role: his aim is to gradually transcend the limitations of physical existence with all its sufferings, and progress to nobler forms, as he slowly reascends the spiritual ladder back to his divine source. The goal will be reached when the 'once unselfconscious godsparks return to their 'Father in Heaven' as self-conscious gods. Such is the teaching.

More and more people are becoming aware of the troubles mankind is bringing upon itself by not co-operating with its earthly mother, Nature; through suffering, the great purifier, we are discovering that 'Crime'—or selfishness—'does not pay'.

By following the footsteps of the Great Ones—and we have had the privilege to meet some of these inspiring personages among the Tibetan refugees—and by learning from them how we can gradually detach ourselves from the more material pleasures of existence, which are so short-lived, we too can find our lives changed.

It is by no means a matter of punishing our 'lower selves' by depriving them of their little consolations, but rather one of concentrating our thoughts to an ever increasing extent on our own higher dreams and aspirations—and in carrying them out! The joy and vigor characteristic of our Tibetan brethren can also be ours, once we start leading the nobler life of love and understanding.

This is an aim which it is surely worth striving for: to enter into ever greater harmony with THAT in which we live and move and have our being, becoming happy, conscious co-operators in the Universal Plan and thereby inspiring the less advanced members of our community to likewise break loose from the bonds of selfishness and greed, causes of all the world's sufferings.

Is it not a joyful and marvelous thought that each one of us, by doing his own little duty, no matter how humble and unseen, within the small circle in which he lives, in assisting his immediate neighbors with kindness, patience and tolerance, is performing an invaluable task, as he helps to bring about peace and goodwill among men. Setting a good example is infinitely more important and inspiring than all the preaching and propaganda we can think up.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Library Building

At the Annual Meeting of Point Loma Publications, Inc. on January 15, 1972, the President announced that he is having a Library building erected on his property at 4877 Gresham St., Pacific Beach, San Diego, to house the growing library and archival material of the corporation. Work will start on this in a few weeks and will be finished by March 24th.

Bound Periodicals and Books Received

The first days of the New Year brought a most valuable gift from Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Laughlin, of Walla Walla, Washington: fourteen cartons of books and magazines. These include many unbound copies of H.P.B.'s *Lucifer* and *The Theosophist*; bound copies of *Judge's Path*; early Point Loma publications: *The Universal Brotherhood*, *The Century Path*, a complete bound set of *The Theosophical Path*, *The Theosophical Forum*, *The Raja-Yoga Messenger*, *The New Way*, *Lucifer*, the *Light-Bringer*; and miscellaneous pamphlets. Books include *The Mahatma Letters*, and works by W. Q. Judge, Katherine Tingley, and G. de Purucker.

The Board of Directors of Point Loma Publications through *The Eclectic Theosophist* expresses its great appreciation of this generous and timely contribution. The name of Laughlin is well known in Theosophical annals. Clarence C. Laughlin, father of J.J., was one of a sturdy group of north-west Theosophists who supported W. Q. Judge in the mid-nineties and was for many years President of the Yamhill Lodge in Oregon. Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Laughlin have for years unremittingly carried on theosophical work in Walla Walla, Washington.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Since our report of September 27, 1971, the following contributions, acknowledged with deep appreciation, have been received: E.F., Butler, N.J., \$4.50; S.A.P., Davis, Calif. \$5.00; J.V.S., Los Angeles, Calif. \$3.00; J.v.d.S., Arnhem, Holland, \$3.00; J.H.V., The Hague, Holland, \$3.00; Anon., \$4.00; L.H., La Crescenta, Calif. \$5.00; J.B., San Diego, Calif. \$2.00; J.S., Anaheim, Calif. \$2.00; G.E.T., Doyleston, Penn., \$1.00; E.L.K., Desert Hot Springs, \$10.50; A.E., Pomona, Calif. \$5.00; F.M.R., Sacramento, Calif. \$5.00; B. & M.J.N., Raytown, Mo., \$5.00; W.M.S., The Hague, Holland, \$5.00; P.S., Manchester, England, \$6.12; D.O., The Hague, Holland, \$5.00; M.H., Sun City, Ariz. \$10.00; J. & L.M., Heemstede, Holland, \$10.00; R.S., Palm Springs, Calif. \$5.00; J. & E.W., San Diego, Calif. \$5.00; N.A., Hollywood, Calif. \$10.00; E.D.F., Butler, N.J., \$7.00; N.L., Stockholm, Sweden, \$5.00; M.G., Victoria, B.C., \$103.00; E.L.K., Desert Hot Springs, Calif. \$10.00;

S.v.N., Palos Verdes, Calif. \$5.00; E.P.W., Edmonton, Canada, \$2.00; D.J., Santa Monica, Calif. \$5.00; J. & D.v.d.S., Bethel Island, Calif. \$5.00; C.H.M., Carlsbad, Calif., \$4.00; R.V., Wynberg, South Africa, \$2.74; Anon., \$50.75; R.M.v.H., Yssel, Holland, \$2.00.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

After consultation with friends and readers of *The Eclectic Theosophist* in widely separated areas, the Board of Directors of P.L. Publications has decided, beginning with our next issue of March 15th, to place *The Eclectic* on a subscription basis, to be published bi-monthly. The subscription price will be \$2.50. Each issue, in addition to the four pages of short articles and news items, will have a four-page Supplement which will contain longer articles.

It will soon be a year since *The Eclectic* appeared, No. 1 bearing the date of March 5, 1971. Since the issuance of its eight numbers, readers will have had opportunity to know something of its content and quality, its aims and purposes. These will be seen basically to be directed towards the promulgation of the great and enduring teachings of Theosophy, undogmatic in attitude and presentation but in content and spirit loyal to the original impulse of 1875. It will be seen, also, that in addition to items of general theosophical interest *The Eclectic* offers a fair and open forum for the honest expression of conviction and the sharing of helpful suggestion from theosophical students concerned for the preservation of those teachings and the welfare of the whole Theosophical Movement.

We hope interest has been sufficiently aroused so that these friends and readers will now become regular subscribers. A subscription blank is enclosed with this issue.

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

Franziska M. Roos, Sacramento, Calif.—I enjoyed what Iverson L. Harris had to say in "A Commonsense Approach to 1975" in the last number of *The Eclectic Theosophist*, and heartily agree with what is said there as to the delusions and dangers. I also read with interest what Gordon Plummer had to offer on the subject and looked up the reference he made to the First Preliminary Memorandum, but failed to find it stated there that a Messenger of the Masters would come to work openly for the human race.

Vonda Urban Williams, Chicago, Ill.—*Wind of the Spirit* has arrived, and that very nice cover design certainly suggests the inspired contents. I'm looking forward to *Golden Precepts* which is the only book of G. de P.'s I do not have . . . Point Loma Publications is a bright promise for the availability of Purucker's teachings. It is a very timely and significant effort that complements the resurgence of H.P.B.'s collected writings.

I.U.S., Chicago, Ill.—We are so happy *Wind of the Spirit* is reprinted.

Peter Stoddard, Manchester, England.—*Theosophy Under Fire* is magnificent, and I thank you most gratefully for enabling me to study this most important document. I am lending it to as many of my friends as I can.

Rosa Bustillos de Quintana, Miami, Fla.—*Mme. Blavatsky Defended* is a courageous and gallant defense of H.P.B. It shows her as she really was: a remarkable woman, lover of humanity, the torch-bearer to the Western world of the Wisdom Religion. When I read the tributes paid her by her pupils and personal friends I recalled many of them fondly, some being my former teachers in Lomaland and others, fellow-students and dear friends. I can never forget and with my mind's eye can still see them as they looked when I left Point Loma in 1913. I took a copy of *Mme. Blavatsky Defended* and presented it to the Miami Public Library as a gift, and will do the same at the Coral Gables Public Library.

Evangeline Day Farrell, Butler, N.J.—I have just started a small study group in Theosophy, 20 for a start. Our first gathering was successful beyond my fondest expectations. Were it not for the

enlightenment of Theosophy I would despair of attempting to hold fast and share that which is good and true. (Re *The Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 7). This issue was a radiant beam of light! Now I know what Eclectic means.

Joy Mills, President, The Theosophical Society in America (Adyar).—We here are all enjoying *The Eclectic Theosophist*, and I congratulate you on your efforts and in the publication of this occasional Newsletter.

Willi Schmidt, The Hague, Holland.—It is not easy, after the articles already published, to add something to the question "Will a Messenger appear in 1975?" If the question is asked with a view to receiving help in a passive way, then one can hardly claim to have learned something from the former Messenger. During the years that have passed since the appearance of H. P. Blavatsky, Theosophists have had ample opportunity to develop into assistants for the great Cause, and the question Will a Messenger appear is only of importance if Theosophists are read to proffer their help to this Messenger eventually. The password "to wake, to work, to wait" is surely appropriate . . .

Last year my brother and I attended at Büdingen (Germany) the yearly gathering—the "Summer School" of the German Theosophists and we made the acquaintance of Mr. & Mrs. Barborka. Subject: Chapter X of *The Divine Plan* by Mr. Barborka. We enjoyed the great harmony and brotherhood of these gatherings, the warm and friendly welcome of the German fellow-students, and we admired the way Mr. Barborka elucidated the subjects. There were also members of the Adyar Lodge present. This year Mrs. Benjamin from England attended the meeting, but we were unable to be present, which we greatly regretted . . . It is stimulating to hear from students in other countries . . .

THEOSOPHY UNDER FIRE

"I go on reading and rereading your masterly handling of the difficult task of witness before a sharply needling attorney in 'On Trial'. It was splendid; and specially notable is your strategy of always stemming out from sound Theosophical roots, so to speak. One was struck by that all the way through. Behind your answer to a specific question there'd always be a solid rock, so to speak. . . . This is Christmas Eve that brings us all together in love and good wishes."—S. Hildor Barton, Porterville, Calif.

Italy Takes Note. The following is an English translation of a review which appeared in the Sept.-Oct. 1971 issue of the bimonthly *L'Età Dell'Acquario* (The Aquarian Age), of Torino, Italy, directed by Bernardino del Boca, a correspondent of our friend Bernhard Mollenhauer of San Diego:

"Iverson L. Harris: *Theosophy Under Fire: A Miniature 'Key to Theosophy'*—An interesting document published in memory of Helen Harris (1890-1970), a Theosophist who gave much to the University of Theosophy at Point Loma, and which records all that was said in court following a bequest to the Theosophical Society of Point Loma contested by the heirs. Harris, in order to make the Judge understand what Theosophy is, spontaneously traces a picture of theosophical thought, which is presented truly as a Key to Theosophy in miniature. The interesting parts of this document are above all the questions of the attorney which prove that even the mind of a cultured person has extraordinary and incomprehensible voids on the spiritual plane."

In the same magazine under the heading *Notiziario Delle Strade Alte*—"Signposts of the Highways"—we read: "*San Diego, California.* On the past 5th of March (1971) there was published the first number of the bulletin *The Eclectic Theosophist* (P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, California, 92109, U.S.A.), directed by Iverson L. Harris, who keeps alive the torch of Point Loma. In this number an appeal is made to all Theosophists for the spreading of the principles which characterize the mentality of the men of the Aquarian Age. Besides, there appears an announcement of the publication of the book by I. L. Harris, *Mme. Blavatsky Defended*, which may be ordered sending \$3.00 to Point Loma Publications, Inc."

REAL Theosophy. The following is an extract from an article by A.J.H. van Leeuwen, in *Theosofia* (Theosophical Society, Adyar, The Hague, Holland), Oct. 1971. After a discussion of the problems of youth today at which he expressed his appreciation of a Congress held recently in Paris: ". . . And yet there is something in everything transient and changing that is eternal and UN-changing—paravidyā, the timeless esoteric wisdom, the divine wisdom, real Theosophy. But finding this esoteric wisdom demands much more than only study and discussion, more than sleepy meditation on harmony and brotherhood, more than faithfully and meekly celebrating beautiful and exalted magic ceremonies, more than remembrance-days, commemoration services, congresses and meetings. It demands the often painful and laborious descent into the deep and dark recesses of our own inner being."